

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /058 W

-----030417 117402 /73

R 021708Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9202

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, BE

SUBJECT: GENDEBIEN PAINTS HIMSELF INTO CORNER

REFS: (A) BRUSSELS 967, (B) BRUSSELS 1175

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

SUMMARY: A QUIXOTIC ATTEMPT OF THE WALLOON RALLY PARTY TO FORCE
A SNAP DECISION ON THE BLUEPRINT FOR BELGIUM'S RE-STRUCTURING
INTO AUTONOMOUS REGIONS FURTHER WEAKENS THE SHAKY TINDEMANS
GOVERNMENT AND PARADOXICALLY DEADLOCKS THE INTER-PARTY "DIALOGUE"
ON THE REGIONALIZATION BLUEPRINT. IGNORED BY OTHER PARTIES,
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RW MUST DECIDE THIS WEEKEND WHETHER TO BACK DOWN TO STALK
INTO THE POLITICAL WILDERNESS, LEAVING TINDEMANS WITH A MONORITY
GOVERNMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. CURRENT "CRISIS" ERUPTED FEBRUARY 26 WHEN THE WALLOON RALLY
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHOSE TO ISSUE AN ULTIMATUM TO
OTHER PARTIES PARTICIPATING IN THE "DIALOGUE" ON A NATIONAL

REGIONALIZATION BLUEPRINT. PARTY PRESIDENT PAUL-HENRI GENDEBIEN ANNOUNCED THAT, IF A "FINAL" DECISION ON REGIONALIZATION WERE NOT TAKEN IN ONE WEEK, RW WOULD QUIT THE INTER-PARTY TALKS. HE INDICATED THAT HIS COULD MEAN A WALKOUT AS WELL FROM THE TINDEMANS COALITION WHICH NEEDS RW'S VOTES TO MAKE A MAJORITY IN PARLIAMENT (REF A).

2. ON MARCH 1 BOTH GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION PARTIES REJECTED THE RW ULTIMATUM. OPPOSITION PARTIES, MOREOVER, SAID IT WAS POINTLESS TO CONTINUE REGIONALIZATION NEGOTIATIONS UNTIL IT IS MADE CLEAR WHETHER BELGIUM WILL HAVE A GOVERNMENT NEXT WEEK. CHRISTIAN PARTY (CVP) PRESIDENT WILFRED NARTENS UNDERTOOK A SEARCH TODAY FOR A WAY OUT OF THE IMPASSE. CONCEIVABLY TINDEMANS WILL DECIDE TO INTERVENE. BUT GENDEBIEN IS COMMITTED TO MEET WITH RW LEADERSHIP MARCH 5 AND DRAW THE CONCLUSIONS FROM WHAT IS NOW A FAILED INITIATIVE.

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3. COMMENT: UNLESS MARTENS PULLS SOMETHING OUT OF THE HAT, IT APPEARS THAT GENDEBIEN'S BLUFF HAS BEEN CALLED AND RW--THE UNRULY AND UNPREDICTABLE MEMBER OF THE TINDEMANS COALITION--HAS NO PLACE TO GO. IF RW QUILTS THE COALITION, THE BRUSSELS LIBERAL GROUP (3 DEPUTIES), NOW IN OPPOSITION, MIGHT WELL SUPPORT A MINORITY TINDEMANS GOVERNMENT BY EITHER VOTING FOR OR ABSTAINING AT CRITICAL TIMES. BUT SUCH A MINORITY GOVERNMENT WOULD SCARCELY BE COMPETENT TO UNDERTAKE CONSEQUENT ACTION ON BELGIUM'S PRESSING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS. (REF B.) LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IF THAT BE THE PROSPECT NEXT WEEK, TINDEMANS MAY DECIDE THE HANGING ON IT NOT WORTH THE EFFORT. RENNER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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From: BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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Original Previous Classification: n/a
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Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 BRUSSELS 967, 77 BRUSSELS 1175
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
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Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2944122
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GENDEBIEN PAINTS HIMSELF INTO CORNER
TAGS: PINT, BE
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/225188ac-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
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